MARVEL Comics
INTRODUCING THE THEATRE OF PAIN
X-NEX 2099
1.25 US
$1.50 CAN
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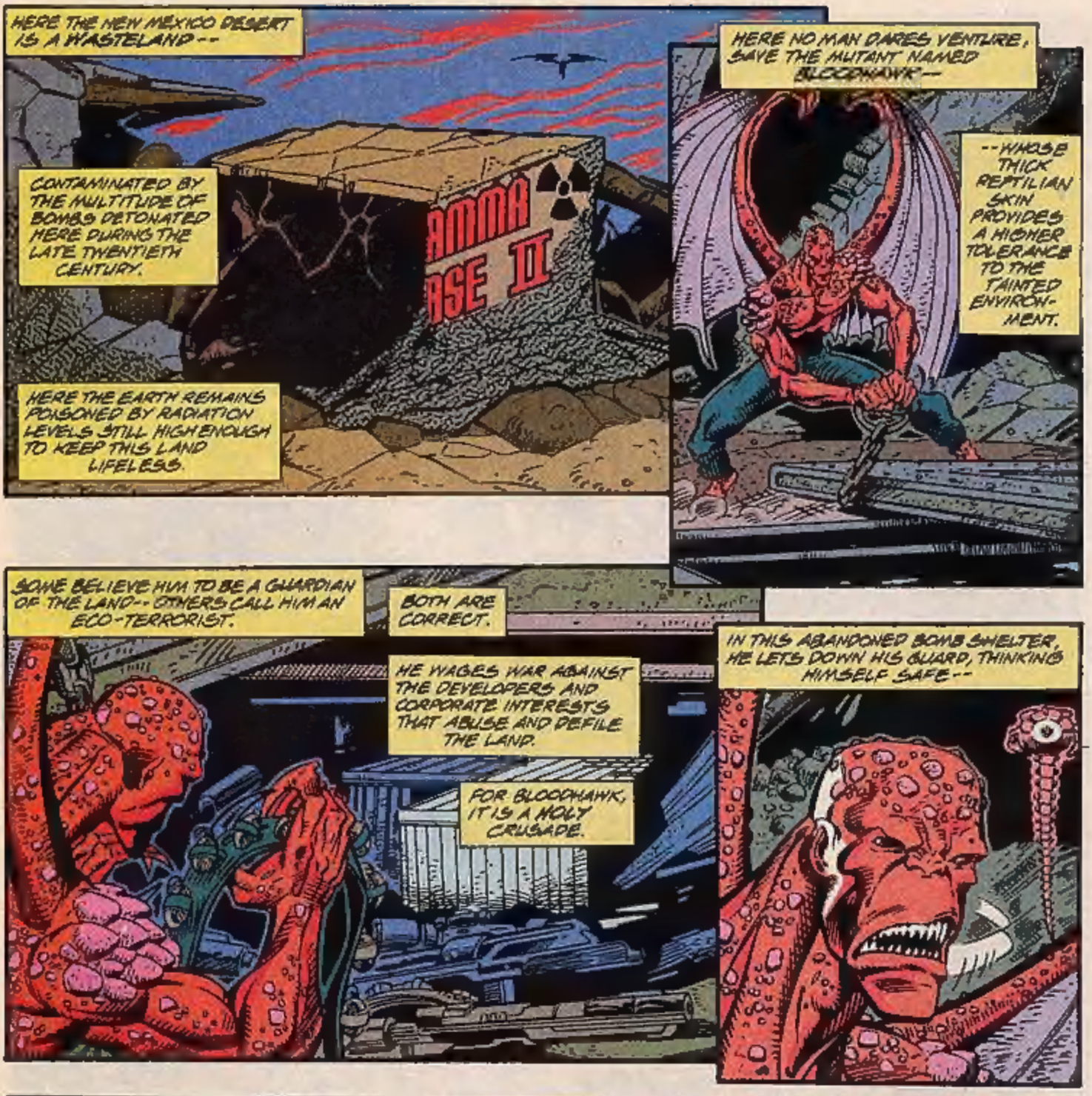
JAN
UK 95p
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
DIRECT EDITION


HERE THE NEW MEXICO DESERT IS A WASTELAND--
CONTAMINATED BY THE MULTITUDE OF BOMBS DETONATED HERE DURING THE LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY.
HERE THE EARTH REMAINS POISONED BY RADIATION LEVELS STILL HIGH ENOUGH TO KEEP THIS LAND LIFELESS.
HERE NO MAN DARES VENTURE, SAVE THE MUTANT NAMED BLOODHAWK--
--WHOSE THICK REPTILIAN SKIN PROVIDES A HIGHER TOLERANCE TO THE TAINTED ENVIRONMENT.
SOME BELIEVE HIM TO BE A GUARDIAN OF THE LAND-- OTHERS CALL HIM AN ECO-TERRORIST.
BOTH ARE CORRECT.
HE WAGES WAR AGAINST THE DEVELOPERS AND CORPORATE INTERESTS THAT ABUSE AND DEFILE THE LAND.
FOR BLOODHAWK, IT IS A HOLY CRUSADE.
IN THIS ABANDONED BOMB SHELTER, HE LETS DOWN HIS GUARD, THINKING HIMSELF SAFE--
--REALIZING TOO LATE THAT HE IS BEING WATCHED--
--AND STALKED.

X-MEN 2099™ Vol. 1, No. 4, January, 1994. Published by MARVEL COMICS, Terry Stewart, President. Stan Lee, Publisher. Michael Hobson, Group Vice President, Publishing. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, NY 10016. Application to mail at second class postage rates is pending at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. Published monthly. Copyright © 1993 Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. All rights reserved. Price $1.25 per copy in the U.S. and $1.70 in Canada. Subscription rate for 12 issues: $15.00 U.S.; $27.00 foreign; and Canadian subscribers must add $8.00 for postage and GST. GST #R127032852. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the condition that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. X-MEN 2099 (including all prominent characters featured in this issue and the distinctive likeness(es) thereof) is a trademark of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC. POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO X-MEN 2099, c/o MARVEL COMICS, 9TH FLOOR, 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, NY 10016.
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HIS STALKER MOVES WITH SPEED AND STRENGTH THAT MATCH HIS.
HE HEARS THE GROWL OF AN ANIMAL AND FEELS HOT BREATH ON THE BACK OF HIS NECK--
--AS SHE LOCKS HIM IN A HOLD THAT WOULD CHOKE NORMAL MEN INTO SUBMISSION.
HE SLAMS HER INTO ONE OF THE SHELTERS COLD STEEL REINFORCED CONCRETE WALLS--
WHAM
--BUT STILL SHE HANGS ON. DETERMINEDLY.
HE RAKES HER BACK WITH RAZOR-SHARP TALONS.
HER BREATHING CHANGES, BECOMES IRREGULAR, AS IF SHE'S--
--LAUGHING--
ENOUGH PLAY, DARLIN'--
--TIME TO GET SERIOUS.
NOOOO...
HER TOUCH TRIGGERS A BOLT OF AGONY--
--LIKE A HOT WIRE HELD TO HIS HEART.
STOP RESISTING!
AAAAAGHHH!

STAN LEE PRESENTS:
THE DARKROOM
YOUR PAIN IS MY STRENGTH, BLOODHAWK!
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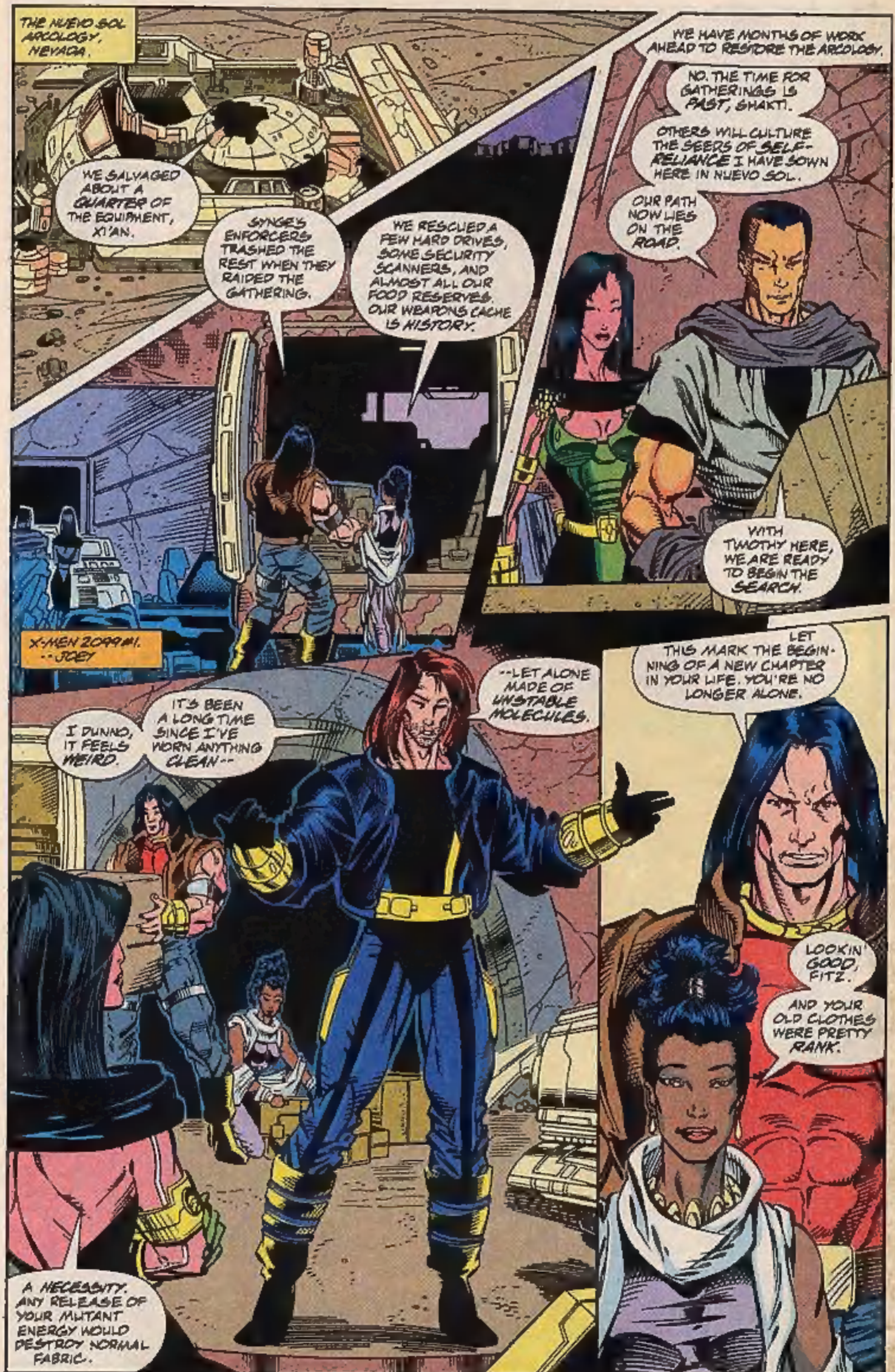
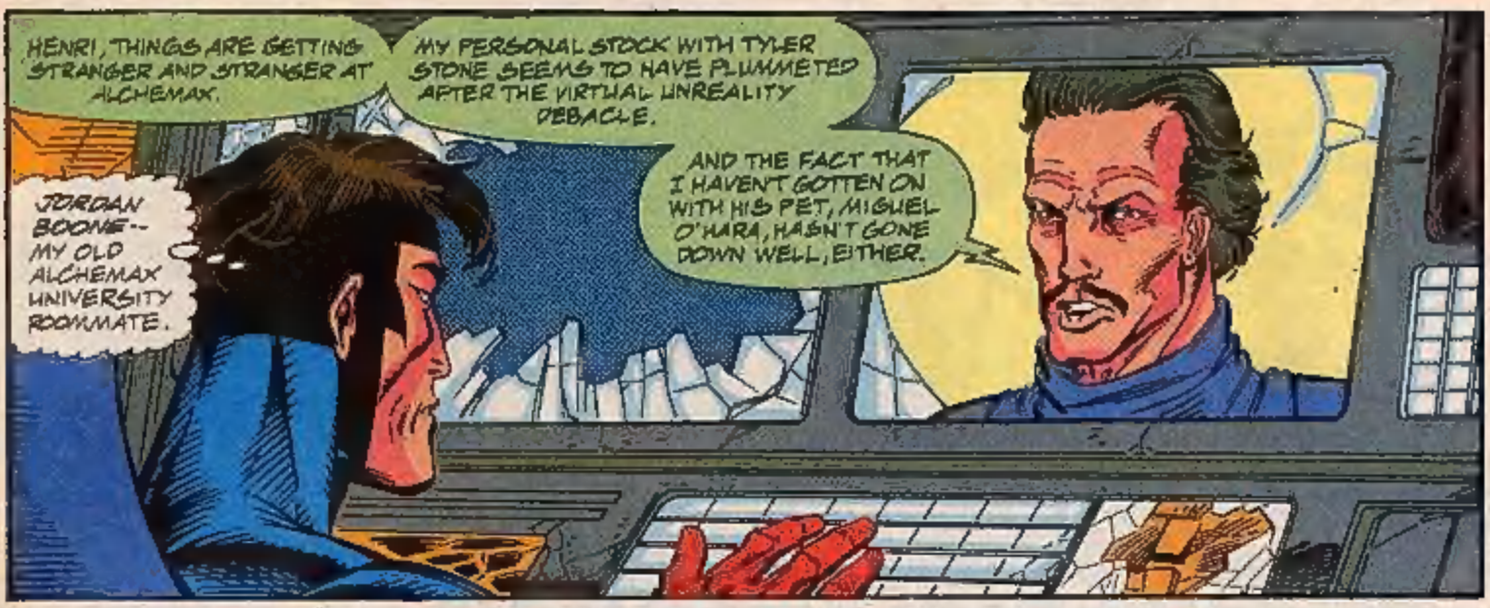
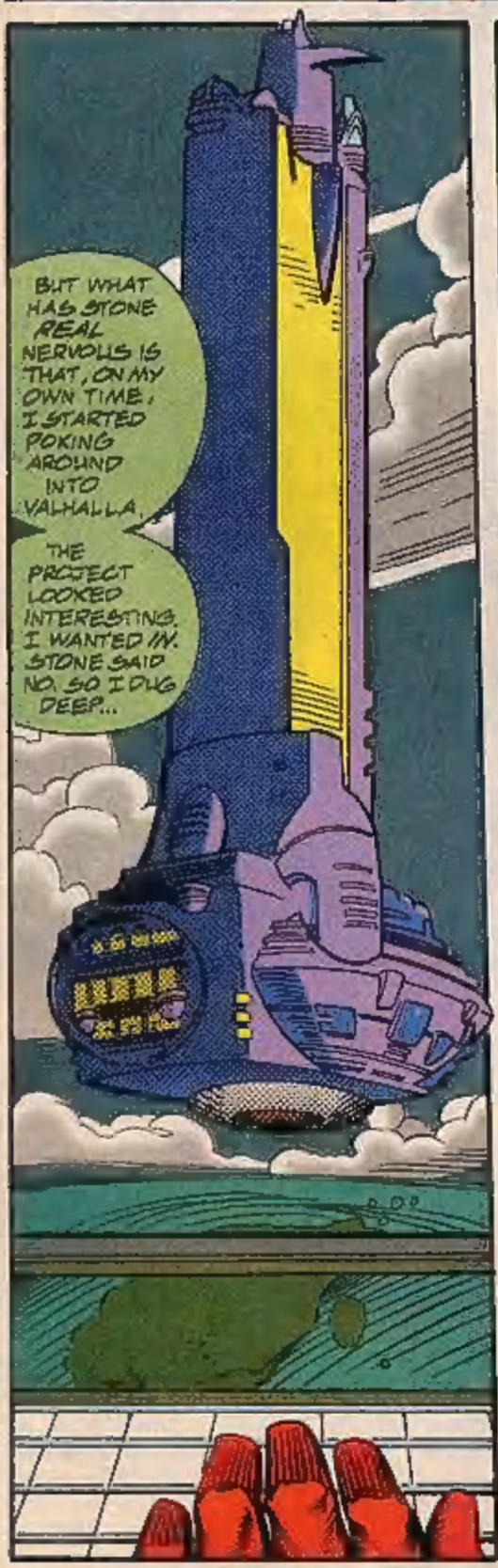

THE NUEVO SOL ARCOLOGY, NEVADA.
WE SALVAGED ABOUT A QUARTER OF THE EQUIPMENT, XI'AN.
SYNGE'S ENFORCERS TRASHED THE REST WHEN THEY RAIDED THE GATHERING.
WE RESCUED A FEW HARD DRIVES, SOME SECURITY SCANNERS, AND ALMOST ALL OUR FOOD RESERVES. OUR WEAPONS CACHE IS HISTORY.
WE HAVE MONTHS OF WORK AHEAD TO RESTORE THE ARCOLOGY.
NO. THE TIME FOR GATHERINGS IS PAST, SHAKTI.
OTHERS WILL CULTURE THE SEEDS OF SELF-RELIANCE I HAVE SOWN HERE IN NUEVO SOL.
OUR PATH NOW LIES ON THE ROAD.
WITH TIMOTHY HERE, WE ARE READY TO BEGIN THE SEARCH.
X-MEN 2099 #1. --JOEY
I DUNNO, IT FEELS WEIRD.
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I'VE WORN ANYTHING CLEAN--
--LET ALONE MADE OF UNSTABLE MOLECULES.
A NECESSITY. ANY RELEASE OF YOUR MUTANT ENERGY WOULD DESTROY NORMAL FABRIC.
LET THIS MARK THE BEGINNING OF A NEW CHAPTER IN YOUR LIFE. YOU'RE NO LONGER ALONE.
LOOKIN' GOOD, FITZ.
AND YOUR OLD CLOTHES WERE PRETTY RANK.

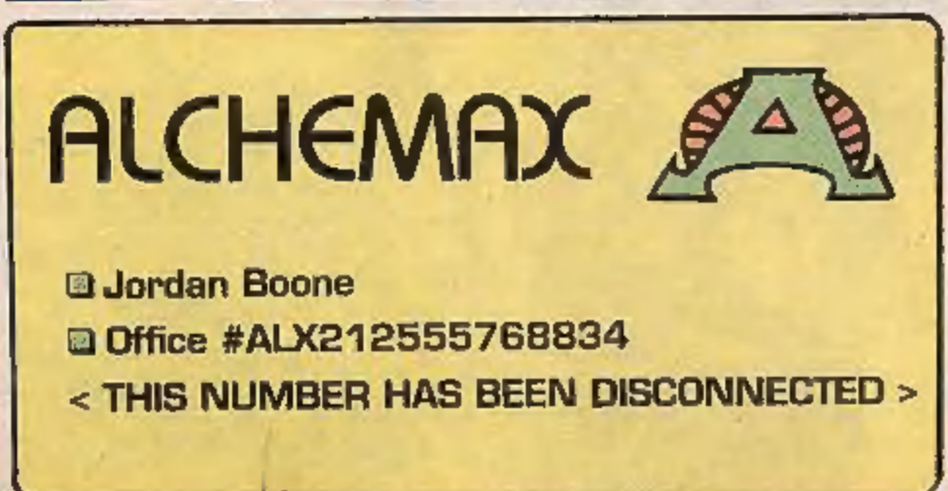
I STILL SENSE DOUBT, TIMOTHY.
I KEEP THINKING ABOUT TINA. SHE BELIEVED IN YOU. MADE ME BELIEVE IN YOU.
AND SHE DIED.
NOT A VERY GLORIOUS START TO YOUR DREAM OF A NEW WORLD.
TINA UNDERSTOOD THE DANGER, AND HER CHOICE WAS MADE FREELY--
I HAVE BEEN GIVEN ONE HAND THAT DESTROYS AND ANOTHER THAT HEALS--
--BUT I CAN AFFECT NOTHING WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF MY MUTANT BRETHREN.
STAND BY ME, TIMOTHY--
--AS AN X-MAN.
I MUST BE CRAZY.
HAS ANYBODY SEEN HENRI? HE ALWAYS SPEEDS OFF WHEN THERE'S MANUAL LABOR TO BE DONE.
"HE SAID HE WAS GOING TO PICK UP THE PIECES IN THE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER."
THOSE VEGAS GOONS REALLY DID A NUMBER ON MY SYSTEM.
TOOK ME AN HOUR JUST TO GET BASIC OPS BACK ON-LINE.
COMPUTER, RETRIEVE MESSAGES.
<SEARCH COMPLETED> ONE MESSAGE. ENCODED. LOCK: HOFFMAN.
DECODE. KEY: YIPPIE KI YAY.


HENRI, THINGS ARE GETTING STRANGER AND STRANGER AT ALCHEMAX.
MY PERSONAL STOCK WITH TYLER STONE SEEMS TO HAVE PLUMMETED AFTER THE VIRTUAL UNREALITY DEBACLE.
AND THE FACT THAT I HAVEN'T GOTTEN ON WITH HIS PET, MIGUEL O'HARA, HASN'T GONE DOWN WELL, EITHER.
JORDAN BOONE-- MY OLD ALCHEMAX UNIVERSITY ROOMMATE.

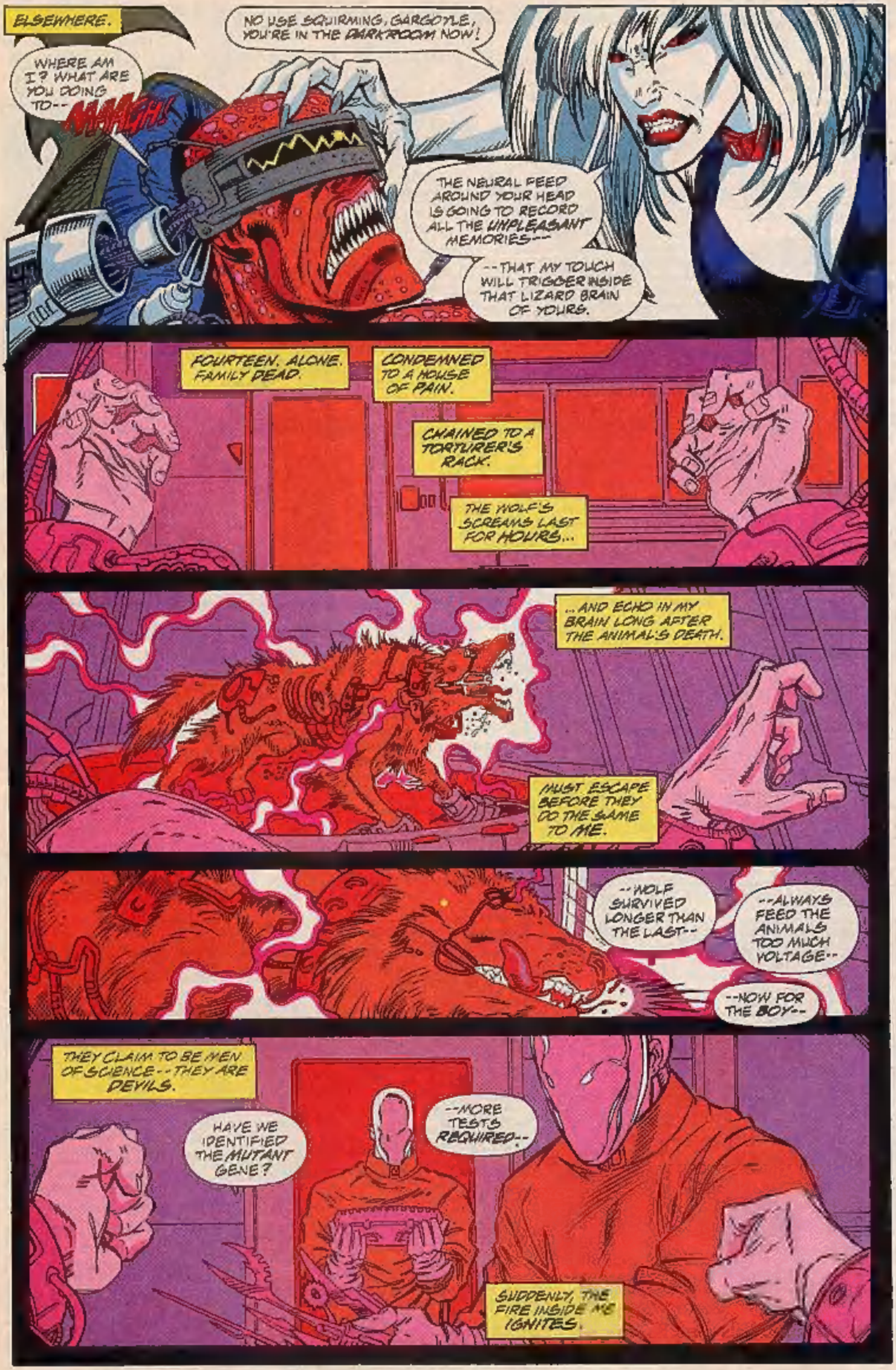

BUT WHAT HAS STONE REAL NERVOUS IS THAT, ON MY OWN TIME, I STARTED POKING AROUND INTO VALHALLA.
THE PROJECT LOOKED INTERESTING. I WANTED IN. STONE SAID NO. SO I DUG DEEP...

...AND FOUND OUT EVERYTHING. I DON'T THINK THEY KNOW I'M ONTO THEM.. AND I CAN'T WAIT AROUND TO FIND OUT.
I'M ABOUT TO DO SOMETHING OUTRAGEOUS, HENRI, THAT'LL PUT EVERYTHING WE EVER DID AS VIDEOGOTHS TO SHAME.
IF YOU DON'T HEAR FROM ME, THINGS HAVE GONE BAD.
SIGNING OFF FOR NOW.

JORDAN'S ONE OF ALCHEMAX'S GOLDEN BOYS. FOR HIM TO BE WORRIED, HE MUST BE TAKING A MAJOR LEAGUE RISK.
COMPUTER, CONNECT ME WITH JORDAN BOONE, PRIVATE LINE.

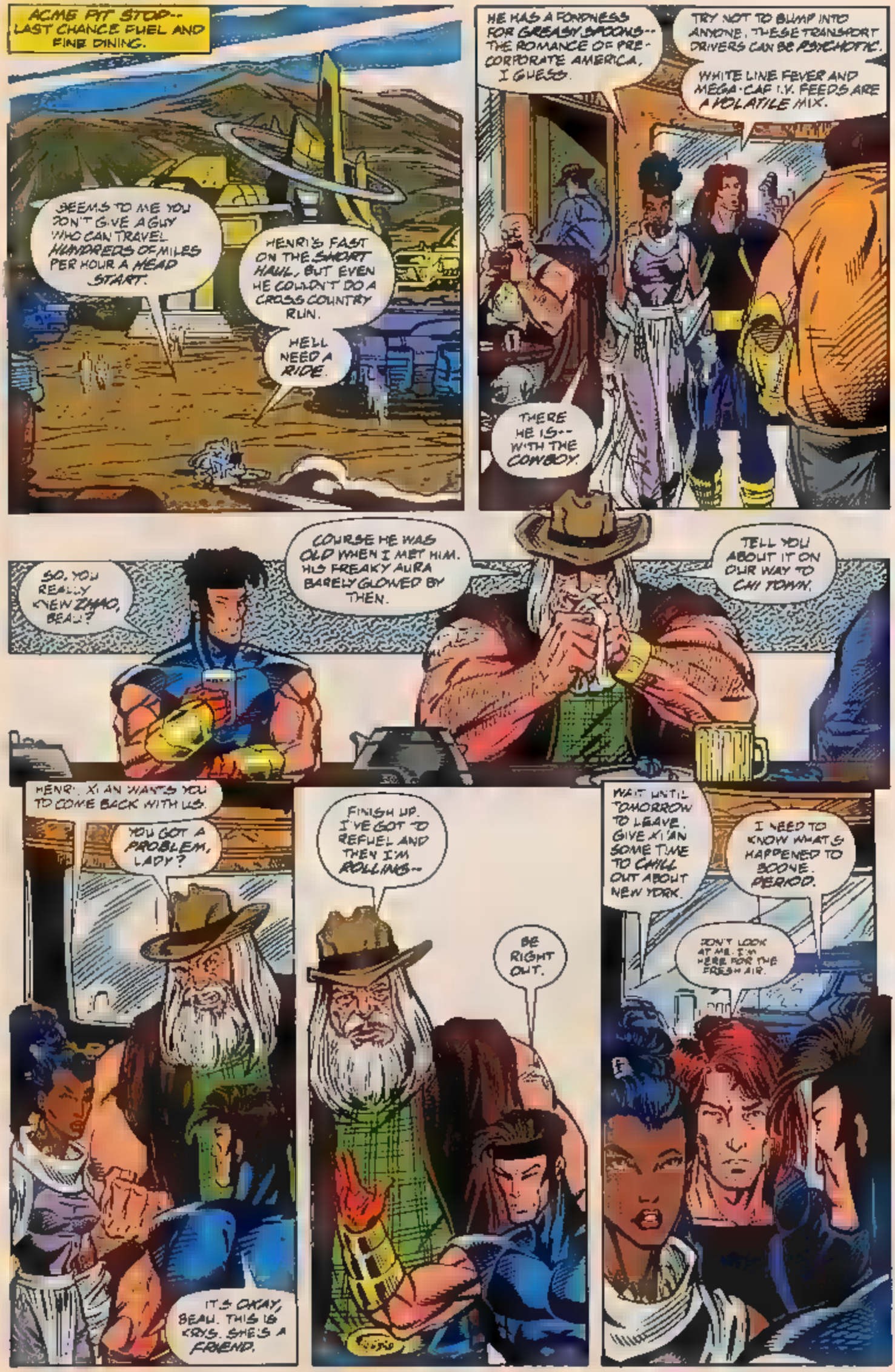

ALCHEMAX
Jordan Boone
Office #ALX212555768834
< THIS NUMBER HAS BEEN DISCONNECTED >

EVERYTHING WORTH CARRYING'S LOADED IN THE EXPERIENCE.
TAKE A BREAK, EDDIE. YOU'VE EARN--
XI'AN, I HAVE TO GO TO NEW YORK. I THINK BOONE--A FRIEND--IS IN TROUBLE.
OUT OF THE QUESTION, HENRI I NEED YOU HERE.
LOOK, BOONE HELPED ME BREAK MY CONTRACT WITH ALCHEMAX A FEW YEARS BACK.
I OWE HIM.
WE'RE AT A CRUCIAL STAGE. WITH TINA GONE, WE NEED TO CLOSE RANKS, NOT BREAK THEM.
DON'T PATRONIZE ME. YOU'RE NOT PROFESSOR X AND I AM NOT YOUR STUDENT.
WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT..
..I'M OUT OF HERE.
WHOOOSH
KRYSTALIN, GIVE HIM AN HOUR TO COOL DOWN. THEN BRING HIM BACK.
WHY DO I HAVE TO PLAY TRUANT OFFICER?
YOU'RE HIS CLOSEST FRIEND. YOU'LL KNOW WHERE TO FIND HIM.
TAKE TIMOTHY WITH YOU. HE COULD USE SOME FRESH AIR.
WOW. XI'AN SUDDENLY GOT REALLY COLD. I DON'T THINK I LIKE THIS SIDE OF HIM.


ELSEWHERE.
WHERE AM I? WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO--
MMMGH!
NO USE SQUIRMING, GARGOYLE, YOU'RE IN THE DARKROOM NOW!
THE NEURAL FEED AROUND YOUR HEAD IS GOING TO RECORD ALL THE UNPLEASANT MEMORIES--
--THAT MY TOUCH WILL TRIGGER INSIDE THAT LIZARD BRAIN OF YOURS.
FOURTEEN. ALONE. FAMILY DEAD.
CONDEMNED TO A HOUSE OF PAIN.
CHAINED TO A TORTURER'S RACK.
THE WOLF'S SCREAMS LAST FOR HOURS...
...AND ECHO IN MY BRAIN LONG AFTER THE ANIMAL'S DEATH.
MUST ESCAPE BEFORE THEY DO THE SAME TO ME.
--WOLF SURVIVED LONGER THAN THE LAST--
--ALWAYS FEED THE ANIMALS TOO MUCH VOLTAGE--
--NOW FOR THE BOY--
THEY CLAIM TO BE MEN OF SCIENCE--THEY ARE DEVILS.
HAVE WE IDENTIFIED THE MUTANT GENE?
--MORE TESTS REQUIRED--
SUDDENLY, THE FIRE INSIDE ME IGNITES.

MY FLESH STRETCHES.
BODY EXPLODES.
ONE THOUGHT--ESCAPE.
HE'S BREAKING THE RESTR--
URMPF.
GET AWAY FROM ME!
GET AWAY FROM--
--ME.
NO...
NO...
NO...
NO...
NO...
NOOOOOO!
THIS ONE'S REPRESSED. SO MUCH DELICIOUS PAIN, CONTROLLER.
TAKE CARE NOT TO DAMAGE OUR GUEST, LUNATICA.
YOU'VE RUINED ONE TOO MANY A SUBJECT WHILE FEEDING ON THEIR ANGUISHED EMOTIONS.

...AND WE STILL HAVE MUCH FURTHER TO DELVE INTO THIS MUTANT'S TROUBLED PSYCHE.
OUR AUDIENCE DEMANDS WE PROVIDE THEM WITH SUFFERING AND PAIN THEY CAN EXPERIENCE VICARIOUSLY.
THEY PAY WELL FOR THE GENUINE TASTE OF BLOOD AND FEAR I OFFER THROUGH THESE ENHANCED REALITY DISCS.
--I'M EAGER TO BRING THE OTHERS HERE.
MAYBE I'M TIRED OF RUNNING YOUR ERRANDS. WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO SET ME FREE?
IN TIME, LUNATICA. DON'T BE PETULANT.
IF YOU COULD FEEL ANYTHING, I'D MAKE YOU HURT, CONTROLLER.
I HAD MY DOUBTS WHEN BRIMSTONE LOVE SUGGESTED I SEEK OUT THE MUTANTS WHO CAUSED SUCH A COMMOTION IN VEGAS--
--BUT NOW THAT I'VE SEEN THE POTENTIAL OF YOUR KIND--
MY NERVES ARE DEAD. I FEEL NEITHER PLEASURE NOR PAIN.
WHICH DOES NOT MEAN I CANNOT CAUSE PAIN IN OTHERS.
THE COLLAR AROUND YOUR NECK SHOULD REMIND YOU OF THAT.
FIND BLOODHAWK'S COMPANIONS.
WHATEVER YOU SAY, CONTROLLER.


ACME PIT STOP-- LAST CHANCE FUEL AND FINE DINING.
SEEMS TO ME YOU DON'T GIVE A GUY WHO CAN TRAVEL HUNDREDS OF MILES PER HOUR A HEAD START.
HENRI'S FAST ON THE SHORT HAUL, BUT EVEN HE COULDN'T DO A CROSS COUNTRY RUN.
HE'LL NEED A RIDE.
HE HAS A FONDNESS FOR GREASY SPOONS-- THE ROMANCE OF PRE-CORPORATE AMERICA, I GUESS.
TRY NOT TO BUMP INTO ANYONE. THESE TRANSPORT DRIVERS CAN BE PSYCHOTIC.
WHITE LINE FEVER AND MEGA-CAF I.V. FEEDS ARE A VOLATILE MIX.
THERE HE IS-- WITH THE COWBOY.
SO, YOU REALLY KNEW ZHAO, BEAU?
COURSE HE WAS OLD WHEN I MET HIM. HIS FREAKY AURA BARELY GLOWED BY THEN.
TELL YOU ABOUT IT ON OUR WAY TO CHI TOWN.
HENRI. XI AN WANTS YOU TO COME BACK WITH US.
YOU GOT A PROBLEM, LADY?
IT'S OKAY, BEAU. THIS IS KRYS. SHE'S A FRIEND.
FINISH UP. I'VE GOT TO REFUEL AND THEN I'M ROLLING--
BE RIGHT OUT.
WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW TO LEAVE. GIVE XI'AN SOME TIME TO CHILL OUT ABOUT NEW YORK.
I NEED TO KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENED TO BOONE. PERIOD.
DON'T LOOK AT ME. I'M HERE FOR THE FRESH AIR.

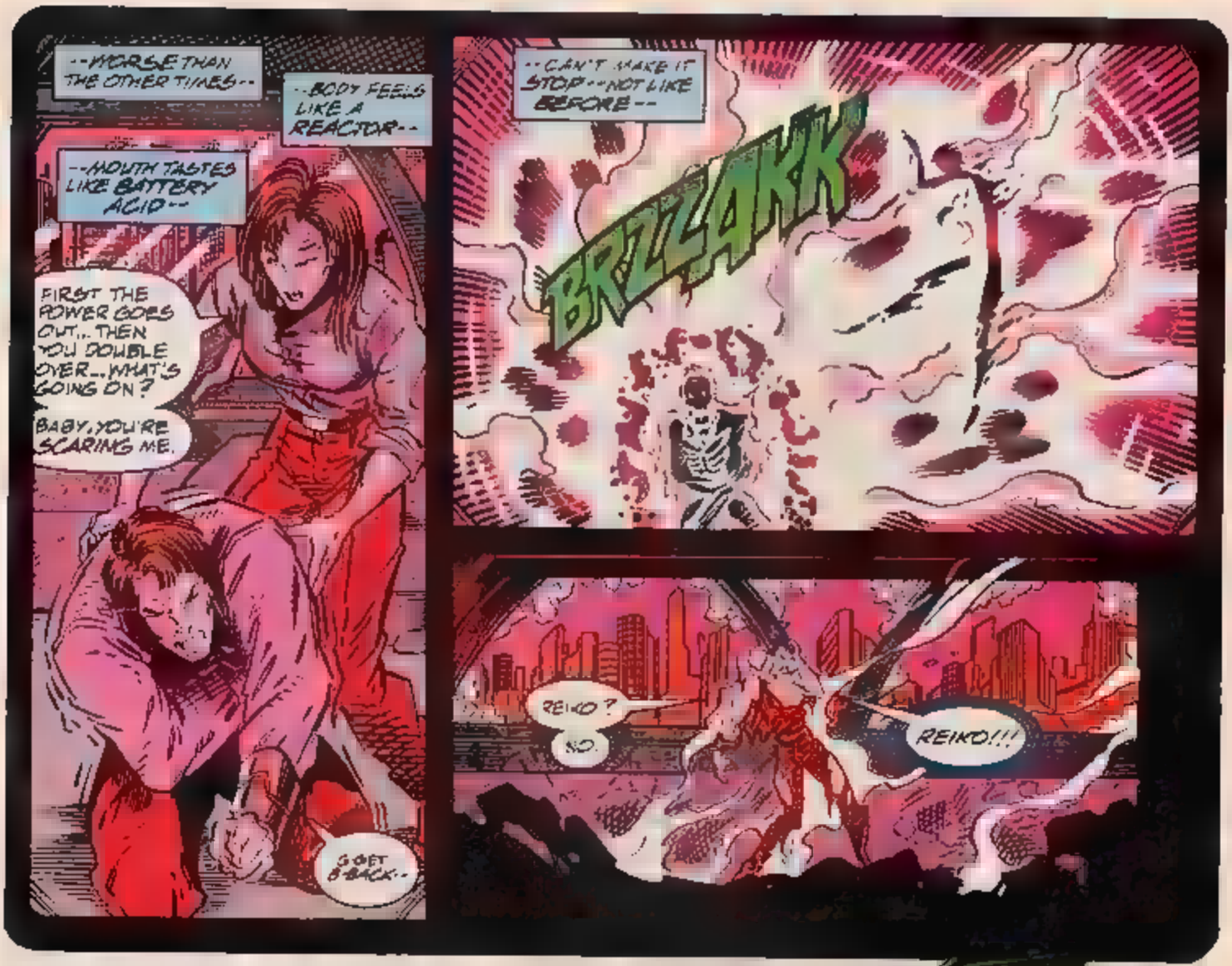
CRAZY MUTANT KIDS WITH THEIR MUSCLED GENES AND RAGING HORMONES...
NEXT THING YOU KNOW, THEY'LL BE CALLING THEMSELVES X-
GOING ANY WAY, COWBOY?
ALL DEPENDS ON WHERE YOU'RE HEADED, PRETTY LADY
OH I DON'T HAVE A DESTINATION. I'M JUST LOOKING FOR A RIDE.
SWEETHEART, YOU CAN RIDE SHOTGUN WITH BEAUREGARD J. FONTANA ANY TIME, ANY PLACE, ANY WHERE.
THAT'S WHAT I LOVE ABOUT YOU BIG RIG BOYS-- ALWAYS SO ACCOMMODATING.
BUT DIDN'T YOUR MAMA WARN YOU ABOUT TALKING TO STRANGERS?
IT'S A DANGEROUS HABIT.
NHA
AAAAAAHHHHH!
THAT SCREAM!
BEAU!
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO HIM?
NOTHING I WON'T DO TO YOU.

DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE, BUT YOU'VE JUST FOUND MORE TROUBLE THAN YOU CAN HANDLE.
YOUR LUG NUT PAL WAS AN APPETIZER.
CHUNCH
YOU'RE THE MAIN COURSE.
WHACK
KRYSTALIN, HOW DO WE DEAL WITH THIS?
THAT WOMAN'S AS FAST AS MEANSTREAK AND TWICE AS STRONG.
YOU MAKE SURE HENRI'S OKAY
I'LL HANDLE THE WITCH.
DARLIN' CAN'T YOU DO BETTER THAN THAT?
HER SKIN MUST BE INCREDIBLY TOUGH TO IGNORE MY CRYSTAL SPLINTERS.
TIME TO RETHINK MY--

THINKIN' TOO MUCH, DARLIN'.
THUMP
UGH!
AND HOW ABOUT YOU-- FITZGERALD, RIGHT? I KNOW ALL ABOUT YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS.
YOU'VE MADE A BIG MISTAKE--
IF ONLY YOU COULD CONTROL YOUR ENERGY-CHANNELLING ABILITIES.
OH, I LEARNED A LOT FROM YOUR WINGED COMPATRIOT, BLOODHAWK--
--BEFORE HE WENT INTO SHOCK.
I'M DISAPPOINTED.
I WAS HOPING YOU'D BE MORE FUN.

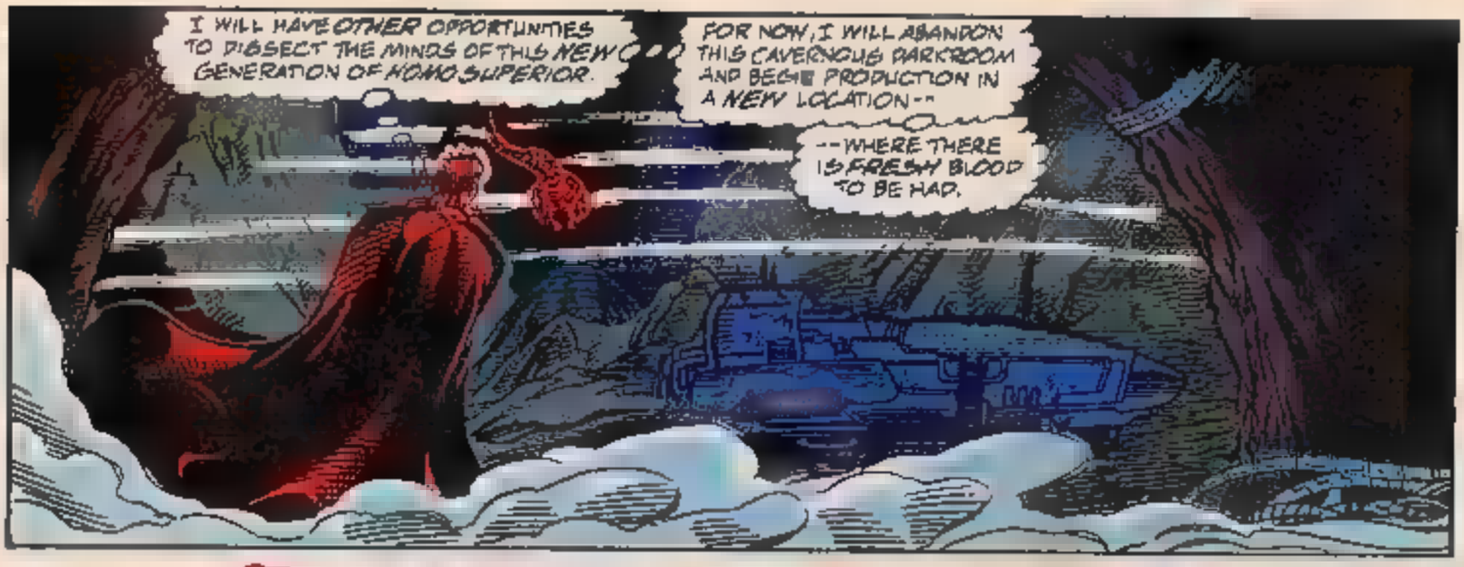
SOMETIME LATER.
--KRYSTALIN-- THAT WOMAN-- WHO--?
EASY, TIM, EASY. WE DON'T KNOW ANY MORE THAN YOU DO.
WA-T--WHY AM I TIED DOWN--?
WE TRIED BREAKING YOU FREE--
--BUT THESE NEURAL RESTRAINTS AROUND OUR NECK INHIBIT OUR POWERS.
NO! STAY AWAY! STAY AWAY!
OUR CELLMATE'S IN BAD SHAPE
YOU NEVER MET BLOODHAWK IN HIS HUMAN FORM.
JUDGING BY THE NEURO-TECH I SEE, OUR CAPTORS DID SOMETHING TO HIS MIND.
PERCEPTIVE, MR. HUANG, OR DO YOU [redacted]ER MEANSTREAK?
THE COLORFUL NAMES ARE PART OF THE TRADITION, YES?
WHO ARE YOU?
I AM THE THIRTEENTH CONTROLLER AND YOU ARE MY GUESTS IN THE DARKROOM.
LA LUNÁTICA BROUGHT YOU HERE.
WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM US?
YOUR DARKEST SECRETS. YOUR HIDDEN FEARS.
LUNA'S TOUCH CAN MAKE YOU RELIVE YOUR MOST TRAUMATIC AND PAINFUL MEMORIES.
WHILE SHE FEEDS ON THAT PSYCHIC TURMOIL, I RECORD IT WITH THE EQUIPMENT YOU SEE AROUND YOU...
I'M IN THE MARKET FOR PAIN.

YOU HYPNOTIZE PEOPLE'S MINDS AND STEAL THEIR LIVES FOR PROFIT?
FOR ART. AND I THINK OF IT AS APPROPRIATION.
I TAKE MOMENTS OF TRANSCENDENT EMOTIONAL INTENSITY FROM OTHERWISE WASTED LIVES--
--AND CREATE WORK APPRECIATED BY A SELECT AUDIENCE
BY A BUNCH OF EMOTIONAL GHOULS, YOU MEAN.
BREAKING YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS' TENACIOUS SPIRITS WILL BE MOST REWARDING.
LUNATICA, CHOOSE OUR NEXT SUBJECT.
THIS ONE.
SO INNOCENT.
SO VULNERABLE.
I HOPE HE LASTS LONGER THAN THE GARGOYLE
GET AWAY FROM ME!
IF YOU AND YOUR CLIENTS ARE SO HOT FOR PAIN, TAKE OFF THIS NEURAL RESTRAINT.
I'LL SHOW YOU REAL PAIN.
WHAT SCARS HIDE BEHIND THAT PRETTY FACE?
TELL LUNATICA WHERE IT HURTS.
NOOO!

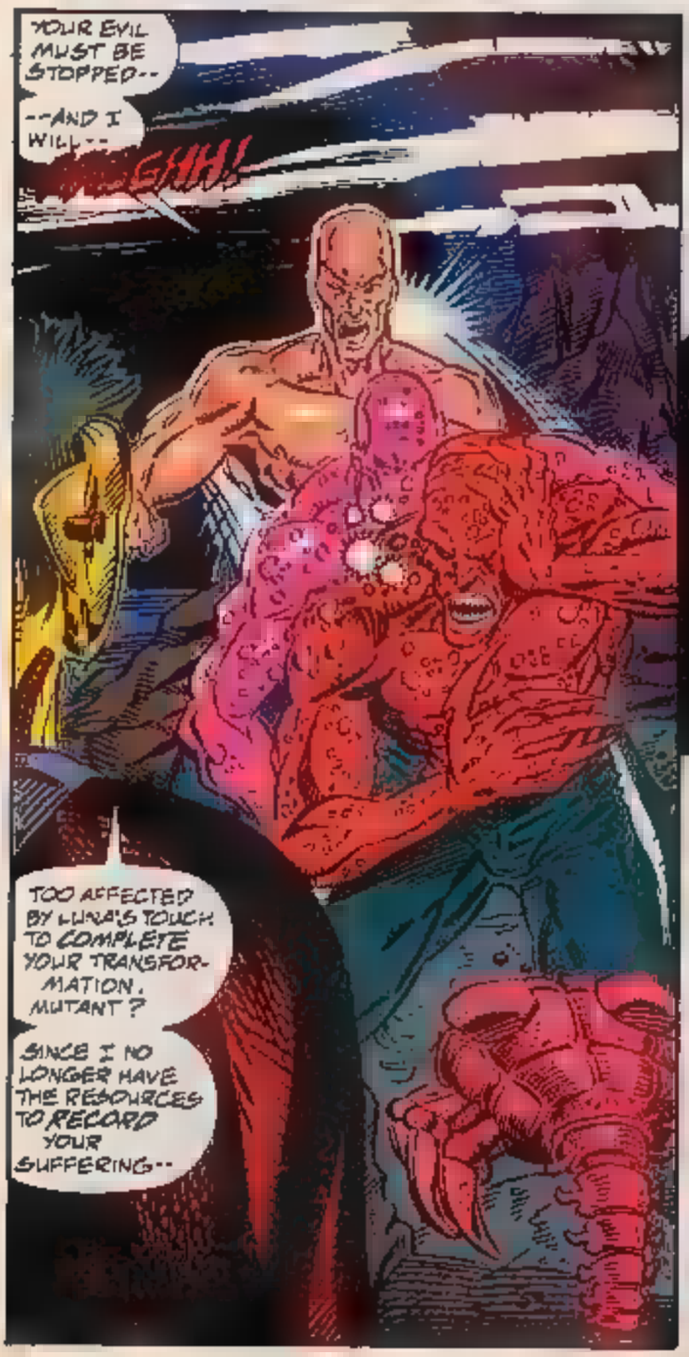

--WORSE THAN THE OTHER TIMES--
--BODY FEELS LIKE A REACTOR--
--MOUTH TASTES LIKE BATTERY ACID--
FIRST THE POWER GOES OUT... THEN YOU DOUBLE OVER... WHAT'S GOING ON?
BABY, YOU'RE SCARING ME.
I GET BACK--
--CAN'T MAKE IT STOP--NOT LIKE BEFORE--
BRZZAKK
REIKO?
NO.
REIKO!!!

SCHROMM-BLINK
HOW DISAPPOINTING.
THE INDUCED TRAUMA ACTIVATED THE MUTANT'S ENERGY-SIPHONING ABILITIES--
--BUT HE SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DRAIN POWER FROM MY SYSTEM. THE NEURAL RECORDER SHOULD DAMPEN ANY DEFENSE RESPONSE.
LUNATICA, REMOVE THE RECORDER BEFORE HE CAUSES FURTHER DAMAGE
TOO LATE. THE SWEET THING'S EXPERIENCING MELTDOWN!
LORD, IT'S MY FAULT!

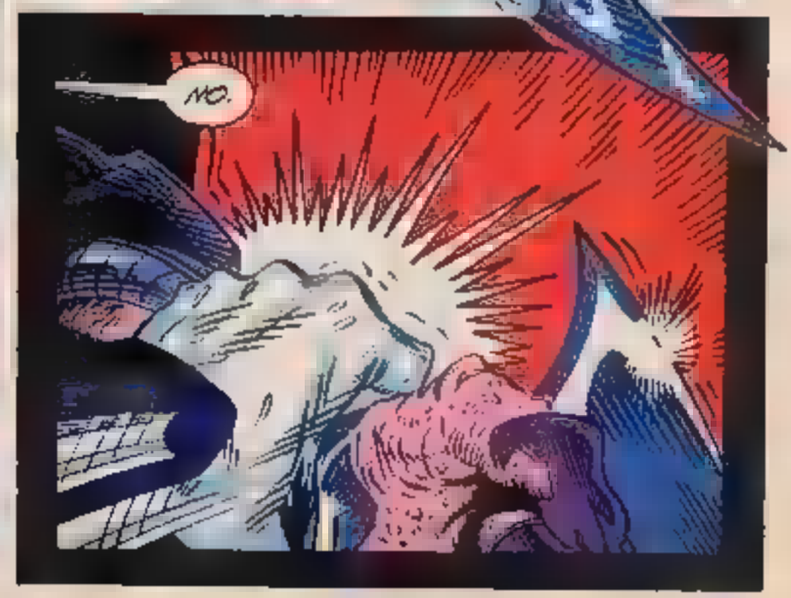
MY FAULT!!
BBZZRAK
UNGHHFF!
TIM'S SEIZURE'S SHORTED OUT THESE COLLARS.
DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, HENRI, BUT THIS PLACE MAKES MY STOMACH TURN.
I SAY WE TEAR IT TO THE GROUND.
SNAP
SNAP
TIM'S DOING THAT JOB BY HIMSELF.
I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM ENERGIZED THIS LONG BEFORE.
IT'S LIKE HE'S POWERED ON PURE RAGE.
I THINK LUNATICA'S TOUCH DID MORE TO TIM THAN UNEARTH A PAINFUL MEMORY.
THE BOY IS DESTROYING MY ENTIRE DARKROOM.
AN UNFORTUNATE SETBACK, BUT SINCE HE ALSO DISABLED LUNA I CANNOT SEEK RETRIBUTION AT THE PRESENT MOMENT.
ESCAPE SEEMS THE WISEST CHOICE.


I WILL HAVE OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO DISSECT THE MINDS OF THIS NEW GENERATION OF HOMO SUPERIOR.
FOR NOW, I WILL ABANDON THIS CAVERNOUS DARKROOM AND BEGIN PRODUCTION IN A NEW LOCATION--
--WHERE THERE IS FRESH BLOOD TO BE HAD.

I HAVE MET YOUR KIND BEFORE, CONTROLLER-THIRTEEN, WHEN I WAS A CHILD.

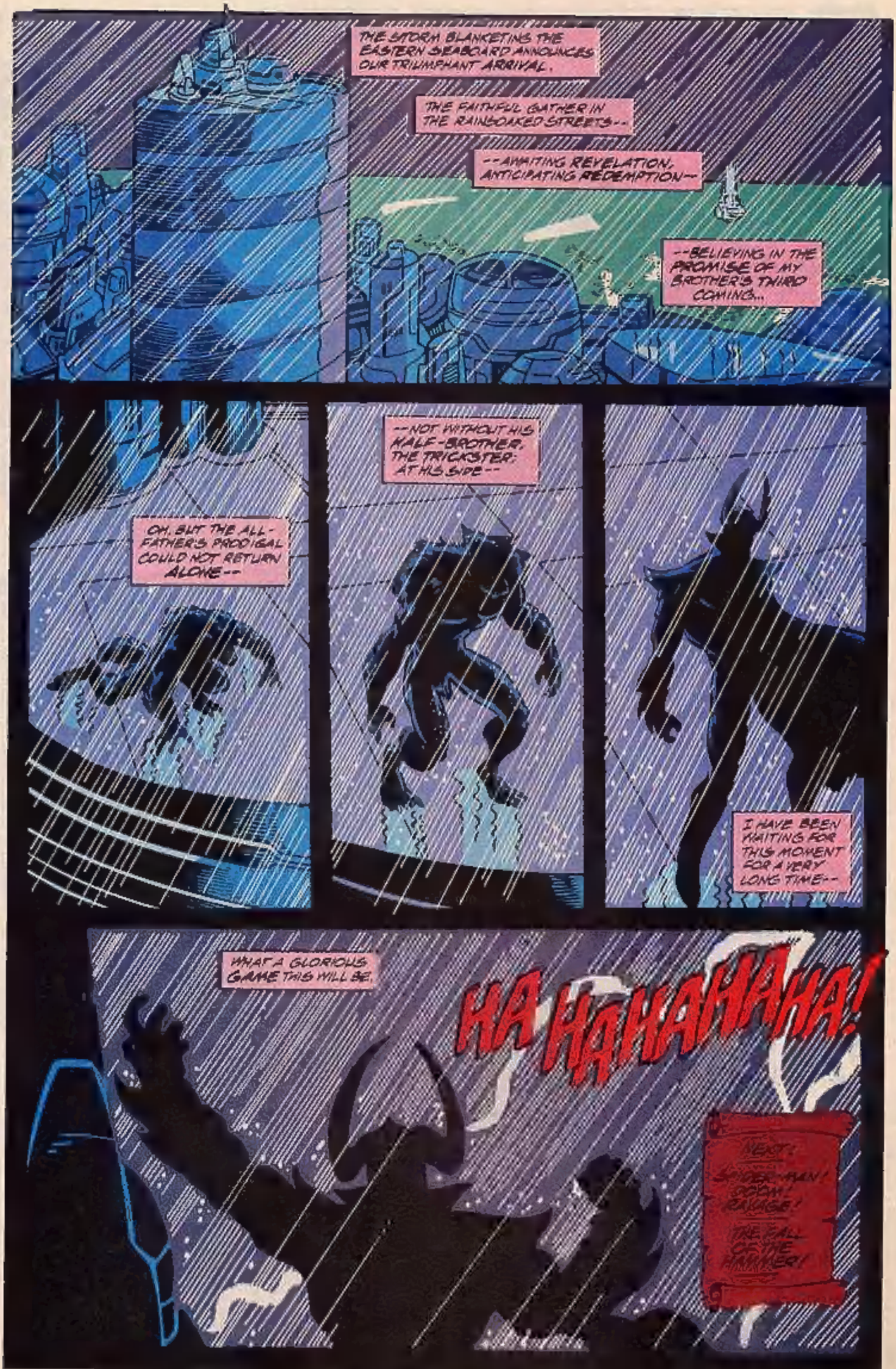

YOUR EVIL MUST BE STOPPED--
--AND I WILL--
GHH!
TOO AFFECTED BY LUNA'S TOUCH TO COMPLETE YOUR TRANSFORMATION, MUTANT?
SINCE I NO LONGER HAVE THE RESOURCES TO RECORD YOUR SUFFERING--

--I WILL KILL YOU AND BE ON MY WAY.
SWISH!


NO.

LUNATICA? BUT THE ENERGY BLAST...
...KNOCKED ME AGAINST THE WALL...
...AND SHORTED OUT MY COLLARS...
...THE ONE YOU KNOTTED AROUND MY NECK TEN YEARS AGO.
NOW YOU'LL PAY FOR THE DECADE OF MISERY YOU PUT ME THROUGH.
WHAP
YOU CAN'T HURT ME, LUNATICA. I FEEL NO PAIN.
YOUR NERVES MAY BE DEAD ON THE OUTSIDE--
--BUT I CAN GET TO YOUR INSIDE, CONTROLLER-THIRTEEN!
AAAAGGHH!

STAY BACK! THE CONTROLLER IS MINE.
I OWE HIM FOR MORE ANGUISH THAN YOU SUFFERED HERE TODAY.
YOU DON'T GET OFF THAT EASY. NOT AFTER WHAT YOU DID TO ME.
CAREFUL, FITZ, YOU'RE STILL OFF BALANCE FROM HER PSYCHIC ASSAULT.
WE UNDERESTIMATED THAT AMAZON ONCE-- LET'S NOT MAKE THAT MISTAKE AGAIN.
WALK AWAY, MUTANTS. OUR CONFLICT IS AT AN END.
NOT THAT EASY, WOMAN.
YOU CAN'T JUST KIDNAP US, PLAY WITH OUR MINDS, AND THEN EXPECT US TO LEAVE AS IF NOTHING HAPPENED.
YOU HAVE A LOT TO ANSWER FOR, SISTER.
I AM A PREDATOR. I DO NOT APOLOGIZE FOR MY ACTIONS.
FORGET ABOUT CONTROLLER-THIRTEEN. THERE ARE MORE SINISTER FORCES BEHIND THE DARKROOM.
CONSIDER YOURSELF LUCKY TO LEAVE HERE ALIVE.
LET HER GO, KRYS. THERE'S NO POINT IN FIGHTING.
BESIDES, I DON'T THINK SHE CARES IF WE "APPROPRIATE" THE CONTROLLER'S AIRCRUISER.
I'M STILL GOING TO NEW YORK.
WHAT ABOUT XI'AN?
WHO CARES? I'M IN, HENRI. LET'S GO.
AND LUNATICA, WHEN I GET BACK, WE'LL MEET AGAIN...
...SWEET THING.


THE STORM BLANKETING THE EASTERN SEABOARD ANNOUNCES OUR TRIUMPHANT ARRIVAL.
THE FAITHFUL GATHER IN THE RAIN-SOAKED STREETS...
--AWAITING REVELATION, ANTICIPATING REDEMPTION--
--BELIEVING IN THE PROMISE OF MY BROTHER'S THIRD COMING...
OH, BUT THE ALL-FATHER'S PRODIGAL COULD NOT RETURN ALONE--
--NOT WITHOUT HIS HALF-BROTHER, THE TRICKSTER; AT HIS SIDE--
I HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS MOMENT FOR A VERY LONG TIME--
WHAT A GLORIOUS GAME THIS WILL BE.
HA HAHAHAHA!
NEXT: SPIDER-MAN! DOOM! SAVAGE! THE FALL OF THE HAMMER!

ARE YOU X-PERIENCED?

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All letters to be considered for publication must include your name and address, though we will withhold that information upon request. Mail correspondence to:
Are You X-perienced, c/o Marvel Comics, 387 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10016.

Out Of My Head

We should *really* call this column "Under My Skin," for all the things that have wormed their way under my skin of late. For example...

In a *Newsweek* piece on radical-turned-robber Katherine Power, the report placed the Kent State Massacre in April '70. Blockheads, it was May 4th, 1970! Check the credits at the end of the story: it took *six people* to get this wrong. Unlike the following week's story, wherein it only took five people to misspell Lorne Greene's name. This in a story about how TV is making people dumber, no less.

Also under my skin is the media's treatment of a $382 million dollar corporate merger that they swear up and down is going to make the consumer's life, *my* life, better. Do I really need to refute this one?

Last, attention prospective funnybook writers: if you send me a plot, please refrain from using the word "velociraptor." It doesn't make you sound smart. It just makes you sound like you go to the movies a lot.

Now some words from nice people who have *no* complaints:

Dear Funky Futurists,

X-MEN 2099 is, how can I say, great, fabulous, terrific, absotively, posilutely and stupendous, all in one word? I can't, so I won't. Everyone in the book so far is fantastic. I really like Eddie's mutant power: sort of a modern day techno-colossus. Tina's cool. Xi'an is very mysterious. Tim has the stuff to become one of the backbone members of our newest group of merry mutants. Desdemona and Lytton: not to sure what to think of them just yet, other than just bad news. Bloodhawk strikes me as a demonic tempered Magneto of his day. Hope I'm wrong. Krystalin and Meanstreak appear to be fillers for the moment. Let's see what happens. Which leads me to the latest mutant femme fatale, Cerebra. Ah, the lovely Shakti! By far one of the most attractive and mysterious members of the fair sex I've seen since Rogue and the White Queen. She strikes me as being the strategist and watchdog of the group. I'm not one to criticize, but I think that it'd add to her secure and vigilant atmosphere if the colorist would make her electronic playroom a darker place lit by the light of her many security monitors reflecting on her lovely features. For that matter, all of Nuevo Sol, which appears to be an Underground Club, should be shown in the same manner. Just too much light and color about the whole atmosphere to suit me. But I'm buying it either way.

1) Who are Del Ruiz, "who showed us sacrifice" and Zheo, "who showed us enlightenment?"

2) Xi'an appears to be an active and mobile Xavier of his day, but what exactly is his mutant power?

This book keeps me coming back for more. Mutant lovers unite!

George Hernandez
N. Massapequa, NY

1) You'll find out. 2) You found out.

Marvel Folks,

I've read and loved your comics for 18 years and only recently decided to write. That was 8 months and 5 letters ago and I just wondered if you ever actually print or answer fan letters? Complaints aside, my compliments on X-MEN 2099. The wait was worth it. The Lim/Kubert cover was great. Can't forget Tom Smith's coloring job or John Francis Moore's writing. It's a great beginning, which isn't as easy as it sounds.

It's a great book I look forward to adding to my growing list of Marvel titles. Bloodhawk and Skullfire seem to be the coolest so far. Meanstreak's also pretty good.

1) Is Bloodhawk superhumanly strong?

2) Is Skullfire invulnerable?

3) How fast is Meanstreak and does he have any other mutant powers?

4) I read that a member of the team dies soon. Really? Why?

Matt Brenneman
16132 SW 108 #71
Tigard, OR 97224

We got a question for *you*, Matt. Where'd you hear that a member of the team would die? Joey's got a...a little gift for them. Yeah, that's it...a gift.

Dear X-Editor,

Congrats to you and your entire crew on a superior job done in X-MEN 2099 #1. This is the 2099 title I've been waiting for.

With your new characters, you have covered all the bases for genetic mutations in the Marvel universe of the future. We have body structure manipulations with Bloodhawk, mental ability mutations with Shakti, etc.

Since it's a commonly held belief that homo superior is the next step on the evolutionary scale, you'd think the future would be full of mutants. Wrong. Instead (pleasingly) we see mutant abilities compounded. Eddie's a prime example of this. Here we have multiple mutant abilities that have nothing to do with each other—sound manipulation and body texture abilities. Excellent! Also, with Xi'an, we see powers brought to the molecular level. I hope Tina's abilities include more than what we've seen, otherwise we'll have just a Mr. Fantastic-type character.

Donnie Santin
1005 Timberline Dr.
Fort Worth, TX 76126

Dear Future Muties,

Awesome! This new 2099 title tops 'em all! It has great art and a great storyline. I like Xi'an the most so far, and my most un-favorite is Junkpile. He has a bad 'tude! My second favorite 2099 title is PUNISHER 2099, which I thought was the best until I read this!

What exactly are Meanstreak's powers? Is he just really fast, a time traveler, or what?

Jeremy Niemeyer
17 Iris Ave.
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Neither, Jer. Apparently, we've fallen down on the job explaining *exactly* how our mighty mutants' powers work...so we'll make an effort to be more specific!

Dear Marvel,

X-MEN 2099 #1 was excellent! The 21st century group is more than worthy enough to carry on the legacy of their 20th century predecessors. And, they've hit the ground running with their very first issue. You should stay with the current line-up at least for a year or so. They should be gathering more members from around the world. I'll bet that in time Xi'an will be able to build a loyal army of mutants. It is obvious that in 2099 mutants are considered to be even more expendable than today.

What exactly happened to Xavier and the other mutants of the 20th century at the time of the Great Purge? Surely, some found a way to survive. Are any of them still around? If so, who are they, where are they and what are their powers?

John W. Migala
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MORE OF MARVEL 2099

Okay, okay...Joey ran off at the mouth about some trivial, tangential thing or other up above, so we've only got room to tell you this: "The Fall of the Hammer" is happening NOW. Here's how it works!

Part One: SPIDER-MAN 2099 #10
Part Two: RAVAGE 2099 #15
Part Four: DOOM 2099 #14
Part Five: THE PUNISHER 2099 #13

Hokay. So where's Part Three, you ask? Why, that's...

NEXT ISSUE

...wherein our misguided mutant band meets just about everybody else in the 2099 Universe! (Hey, howcum nobody ever wants to start their own galaxy or solar system? It's always a universe!) Be here for X-MEN #5, only because it's the coolest issue yet!